

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for processing packets from an Input/Output (I/O) device, comprising:
  - maintaining information indicating a different pair of a first buffer and a second buffer for use with each descriptor assigned to each of a plurality of descriptors, wherein one of the first and second buffers ~~is assigned to~~ one descriptor is used by the I/O device, and wherein the I/O device write packets to the buffers assigned to the descriptors;
  - accessing the first buffer including a packet from the I/O device, wherein the accessed first buffer is assigned to an accessed descriptor that is one of the plurality of descriptors;
  - processing the packet in the accessed first buffer; and
  - if the second buffer assigned to the accessed descriptor is available, then updating information for the accessed descriptor to indicate that the second buffer is assigned to the accessed descriptor before completing the processing of the packet in the first buffer.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
  - after completing the processing of the packet in the first buffer, indicating that the first buffer is available for assignment to the accessed descriptor.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
  - if the second buffer assigned to the accessed descriptor is not available when proceeding to process the packet in the buffer, then copying the packet in the first buffer to a temporary buffer to process; and
  - after copying the packet in the first buffer to the temporary buffer, updating information for the accessed descriptor used by the I/O device to indicate that the first buffer is assigned to the descriptor and available for use by the I/O device.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the operations of accessing the first buffer, copying the packet in the first buffer to the temporary buffer, and updating information for the accessed descriptor to indicate that the first buffer is assigned to the accessed descriptor and available are performed on a single thread of execution.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the operations of accessing the first buffer and updating information for the accessed descriptor to indicate that the first buffer is assigned to the accessed descriptor and available are performed by an interrupt handler invoked in response to an interrupt signal from the I/O device and the operation of copying the packet in the first buffer to the temporary buffer is performed by a protocol driver.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, further comprising:  
returning, by the protocol driver, the first buffer to the interrupt handler after copying the packet in the first buffer to the temporary buffer, wherein the interrupt handler updates information for the accessed descriptor to indicate that the first buffer is assigned to the accessed descriptor and available for use by the I/O device.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein processing the packet in the first buffer comprises:

calling a protocol driver to process the packet in the first buffer, wherein the protocol driver spawns a protocol thread to process the packet and wherein the protocol thread calls a function to indicate that the first buffer is available for assignment to the accessed descriptor after completing the copying of the first packet in the first buffer.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the I/O device comprises a network adapter that writes packets directly to buffers assigned to descriptors that are indicated as available, further comprising:

generating an interrupt signal, with the I/O device, after writing at least one packet to at least one buffer assigned to at least one descriptor, wherein the first buffer including the packet is accessed after the interrupt signal is received.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein there are at least two buffers assigned to ~~[[for]]~~ each descriptor.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein for each descriptor there is one software descriptor and one hardware descriptor, wherein the software descriptor indicates the first and second buffers capable of being assigned to the descriptor and the hardware descriptor indicates one buffer assigned to the descriptor and the availability of the buffer assigned to the descriptor to receive data from the I/O device.

11. (Currently Amended) A system, comprising:

a processor;

a storage device;

an Input/Output (I/O) device;

a storage controller for managing access to the storage device;

at least one program that when executed by the processor performs:

(i) maintain information indicating a different pair of a first buffer and a second buffer assigned for use with each descriptor to each of a plurality of descriptors, wherein one of the first and second buffers ~~[[is]]~~ assigned to the one descriptor is used by the I/O device, and wherein the I/O device write packets to the buffers assigned to the descriptors;

(ii) access the first buffer including a packet from the I/O device, wherein the accessed first buffer is assigned to an accessed descriptor that is one of the plurality of descriptors;

(iii) process the packet in the accessed first buffer; and

(iv) if the second buffer assigned to the accessed descriptor is available, then update information for the accessed descriptor to indicate that the second buffer is assigned to the accessed descriptor before completing the processing of the packet in the first buffer.

12. (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein the at least one program that when executed by the processor further performs:

after completing the processing of the packet in the first buffer, indicate that the first buffer is available for assignment to the accessed descriptor.

13. (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein the at least one program that when executed by the processor further performs:

if the second buffer assigned to the accessed descriptor is not available when proceeding to process the packet in the buffer, then copy the packet in the first buffer to a temporary buffer to process; and

after copying the packet in the first buffer to the temporary buffer, update information for the accessed descriptor used by the I/O device to indicate that the first buffer is assigned to the descriptor and available for use by the I/O device.

14. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the operations of accessing the first buffer, copying the packet in the first buffer to the temporary buffer, and updating information for the accessed descriptor to indicate that the first buffer is assigned to the accessed descriptor and available are performed on a single thread of execution.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein the at least one program includes an interrupt handler, invoked in response to an interrupt signal from the I/O device, to perform the operations of accessing the first buffer and updating information for the accessed descriptor to indicate that the first buffer is assigned to the accessed descriptor and available are performed and wherein the at least one program includes a protocol driver to perform the operation of copying the packet in the first buffer to the temporary buffer.

16. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein the protocol driver further performs:  
return the first buffer to the interrupt handler after copying the packet in the first buffer to the temporary buffer, wherein the interrupt handler updates information for the accessed descriptor to indicate that the first buffer is assigned to the accessed descriptor and available for use by the I/O device.

17. (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein processing the packet in the first buffer comprises:

calling a protocol driver to process the packet in the first buffer, wherein the protocol driver spawns a protocol thread to process the packet and wherein the protocol thread calls a function to indicate that the first buffer is available for assignment to the accessed descriptor after completing the copying of the first packet in the first buffer.

18. (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein the I/O device comprises a network adapter that writes packets directly to buffers assigned to descriptors that are indicated as available, wherein the I/O device performs:

generate an interrupt signal ,after writing at least one packet to at least one buffer assigned to at least one descriptor, wherein the first buffer including the packet is accessed after the interrupt signal is received.

19. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 11, wherein there are at least two buffers assigned to ~~[[for]]~~ each descriptor.

20. (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein for each descriptor there is one software descriptor and one hardware descriptor, wherein the software descriptor indicates the first and second buffers capable of being assigned to the descriptor and the hardware descriptor indicates one buffer assigned to the descriptor and the availability of the buffer assigned to the descriptor to receive data from the I/O device.

21. (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture for processing packets from an Input/Output (I/O) device, wherein the article of manufacture causes operations to be performed, the operations comprising:

maintaining information indicating a different pair of a first buffer and a second buffer ~~for use with each descriptor~~ assigned to each of a plurality of descriptors, wherein one of the first and second buffers ~~[[is]]~~ assigned to ~~[[the]]~~ one descriptor is used by the I/O device, and wherein the I/O device write packets to the buffers assigned to the descriptors;

accessing the first buffer including a packet from the I/O device, wherein the accessed first buffer is assigned to an accessed descriptor that is one of the plurality of descriptors;

processing the packet in the accessed first buffer; and

if the second buffer assigned to the accessed descriptor is available, then updating information for the accessed descriptor to indicate that the second buffer is assigned to the accessed descriptor before completing the processing of the packet in the first buffer.

22. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 21, wherein the operations further comprise:

after completing the processing of the packet in the first buffer, indicating that the first buffer is available for assignment to the accessed descriptor.

23. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 21, wherein the operations further comprise:

if the second buffer assigned to the accessed descriptor is not available when proceeding to process the packet in the buffer, then copying the packet in the first buffer to a temporary buffer to process; and

after copying the packet in the first buffer to the temporary buffer, updating information for the accessed descriptor used by the I/O device to indicate that the first buffer is assigned to the descriptor and available for use by the I/O device.

24. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 23, wherein the operations of accessing the first buffer, copying the packet in the first buffer to the temporary buffer, and updating information for the accessed descriptor to indicate that the first buffer is assigned to the accessed descriptor and available are performed on a single thread of execution.

25. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 24, wherein the operations of accessing the first buffer and updating information for the accessed descriptor to indicate that the first buffer is assigned to the accessed descriptor and available are performed by an interrupt handler invoked in response to an interrupt signal from the I/O device and the operation of copying the packet in the first buffer to the temporary buffer is performed by a protocol driver.

26. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 25, wherein the operations further comprise:

returning, by the protocol driver, the first buffer to the interrupt handler after copying the packet in the first buffer to the temporary buffer, wherein the interrupt handler updates information for the accessed descriptor to indicate that the first buffer is assigned to the accessed descriptor and available for use by the I/O device.

27. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 21, wherein processing the packet in the first buffer comprises:

calling a protocol driver to process the packet in the first buffer, wherein the protocol driver spawns a protocol thread to process the packet and wherein the protocol thread calls a function to indicate that the first buffer is available for assignment to the accessed descriptor after completing the copying of the first packet in the first buffer.

28. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 21, wherein the I/O device comprises a network adapter that writes packets directly to buffers assigned to descriptors that are indicated as available, wherein the operations further comprise:

generating an interrupt signal, with the I/O device, after writing at least one packet to at least one buffer assigned to at least one descriptor, wherein the first buffer including the packet is accessed after the interrupt signal is received.

29. (Currently Amended) The article of manufacture of claim 21, wherein there are at least two buffers [[for]] assigned to each descriptor.

30. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 21, wherein for each descriptor there is one software descriptor and one hardware descriptor, wherein the software descriptor indicates the first and second buffers capable of being assigned to the descriptor and the hardware descriptor indicates one buffer assigned to the descriptor and the availability of the buffer assigned to the descriptor to receive data from the I/O device.